

Hold me tight and warm me up

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Hold me tight and warm me up

by [DrJLecter](#)

Summary

Will drove into a snow storm to get home to his dogs. He should have stayed at Hannibal's place, because now he's stuck and his gas is running out.

Notes

Thank you Ship for reminding me of the fact that there are NOT ENOUGH HYPOTHERMIA FICS OUT THERE. Considering Hannibal almost constantly plays in winter, this is a real crime XD

Thank you Llew for being the bestest beta :3 (all remaining mistakes are my own)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

- Translation into Русский available: [Обними меня крепче и согрей](#) by [SnakeCorps](#)

The snow storm came quickly and with a vengeance.

Will cursed silently as he tried to keep the car on the road, strong winds constantly battling with the ice and snow to see what would get to push him off the street first. It was still about 20 minutes to his house and with every passing minute, Will's hope to make it in one piece dwindled at an alarming rate.

He barely could see the road anymore, the storm building a white plane of snow in front of him where just hours before had been a highway, and the wipers barely managed to keep the amount of snow off the windshield.

His car lights were the only light source in the pitch black darkness and all they did was illuminate the falling snow, showing him nothing more than a white wall right in front of his car. Nobody else had been stupid enough to brave the roads this night.

Leaving his dogs alone though, that hadn't been an option, especially with the weather forecast. It had been now or never and if he hadn't tried, his dogs probably would have been alone for days.

He should have left earlier.

He shouldn't have let Hannibal talk him into another glass of wine in front of the fireplace in hope he would stay the night.

The car suddenly swayed on an icy patch and Will cursed again, fighting to stabilize the vehicle.

With a dull thud he came to an abrupt standstill as he ended up in a snowdrift. He tried maneuvering back immediately, but his tires didn't find any grip on the ice and snow and he gave up after a few fruitless attempts.

Will hit the wheel with his palms in an angry outburst.

"Fuck," he cursed at the universe in general.

He looked around hopelessly. It was the end of the week and the end of the day so of course he was low on fuel and his phone had died at some point during dinner.

The side of his car facing the strong wind was already completely covered in snow and he knew it wouldn't take long until his car was barely more than another bump in the white landscape. His fuel would maybe last another hour. If he was lucky.

He switched off the car.

The sudden silence was deafening for a moment before the storm made itself known, only interrupted by the clicking of the rapidly cooling motor.

He knew he could survive the night if he saved his fuel. The interior of the car was warm and cozy for now and he probably could make it through at least two or three hours before he'd have to switch the car back on to reheat the space.

Will could already feel the cold air creeping into the legroom and he desperately hoped he was right.

He quickly put on his thick jacket, woolen hat and gloves and climbed into the backseat where he wrapped himself into the dog blankets he had stored there, feet tucked under himself.

The storm howled around his car, but otherwise it was eerily quiet and Will wished he would have stayed with Hannibal. The thought that he could sit in front of the crackling fireplace on a soft couch warmed by wine and good food and having a quiet conversation was downright painful.

Will had made peace with the thought of living his life with his dogs years ago and the idea had never hurt as much as it did now. He had gotten so used to spending his time with Hannibal in his house that the thought of going home to Wolf Trap left him empty and cold. Literally.

Will snorted.

Hannibal's house had been decorated for Christmas these last days and it had been beautiful. He'd kept the charm of his European heritage instead of going all out the American way. The commercialized insanity was kept out and the gentle warmth of it was like an ache in his chest, full of yearning for something he'd never known.

Will felt tears prickling behind his eyes and he wiped at them angrily.

"Stop this, Graham," he muttered. "It's never gonna happen."

Hannibal was too good for him and there was no sense in clinging to a false hope in his head. His stream had to be enough.

He sighed heavily and the air burned cold in his lungs. Most of the warmth had seeped out now and had been replaced by coldness. Lying down on his side he drew his knees to his chest and wrapped the blankets tighter around himself. He was still warm enough to be comfortable, but he knew it wouldn't stay that way. He just needed to stay awake to not miss the moment where he had to restart the car before he became dangerously cold.

When he woke up, he was freezing.

He'd shifted in his sleep and ice cold air had seeped between the blankets, leaving him shaking and stiff.

Will cursed, teeth clacking painfully.

He had no idea what time it was and how long he'd been out, but he needed to move immediately.

He couldn't feel his toes and fingers and his joints and muscles had locked up already. Stupid, so very stupid.

In painfully slow and halting movements, he stretched forwards until he could grasp the car keys and turned them in the ignition. It took several tries, but the car stuttered alive and Will gave a relieved sigh as he leaned back and wrapped himself back into his nest.

It felt like hours before he felt the air turn warmer around him and he could have sobbed in relief.

The dim lights of the clock and the status lights showed him that it was barely midnight and he was completely snowed in. All windows showed the same wall of snow. Will thanked all deities that he wasn't claustrophobic, because this felt like a coffin.

With a shock he realized that this could very well turn into one, when he didn't get any kind of oxygen into this car.

"Fuck."

With adrenaline fuelled strength, he worked to get the left window of the backseat down. Snow started to cascade into the interior right away and as soon as he managed to fit his hand through the gap he worked through the seemingly endless amount of snow. It got into the sleeve of his jacket and the cold wetness seeped into his shirt and down his arm.

Half the seat and leg room was covered in snow before finally a cold breeze wafted into the car and Will took a desperate breath of the fresh air. He moaned at the relief surging through his veins.

He took a few deep breaths before he carefully closed the window, only leaving the smallest of gaps to allow some oxygen inside without too much of the warmth escaping right away. He guessed he had about half an hour left before his gas ran out and he debated whether to save it for later or let it run out now.

He had just started to feel his hands and legs again, the uncomfortably painful prickling feeling everywhere; he absolutely loathed the idea of killing the engine right now.

He decided to let it run for a few minutes longer to make sure he'd warmed up enough to survive another few hours.

When he woke up the next time it was to absolute and utter silence and darkness.

The cold brush of air against his face the only indication where he was and what had happened. His car was dead. He was cold. So cold.

Will moaned in despair. Shit.

His face burned and he had lost the feeling in his limbs up to his elbows and knees. This was not good.

Trying to move hurt and after a few moments of struggling against the seemingly unbelievably heavy blankets he fell back against the seat with a sigh that burned in his lungs.

Will stared into the darkness, trying to keep his breathing level and regular. Freaking out would not help him at all right now.

He wondered who would miss him first, besides his dogs that would go crazy with hunger in three or four days at the latest. Will guessed it would take at least a week before anyone would notice. Alana maybe, when he didn't return her well wishes for the New Year.

Hannibal would be too busy throwing his parties to wonder about him. Why should he. Just because he'd invited him for Christmas out of pity didn't mean he would be on the man's mind once he'd declined the invitation.

With another sigh, which suspiciously sounded like a sob, he tried to curl back into himself.

Will closed his eyes.

He should try to stay awake, but sleep sounded so good right now.

The sudden red flash behind his closed eyelids felt like a figment of his imagination, but the painful way his body was jostled suddenly, wasn't. Will groaned in protest.

A voice penetrated his fogged up mind from far away. It sounded familiar.

His hands were pulled up from under the blankets and his gloves dragged off his stiff fingers. The pain of it finally forced him to open his eyes.

There was a figure leaning through the open door of his car, bending over him, all wrapped up in a thick coat, a scarf over his face and a thick pelt hat on his head. Ski glasses covered their eyes.

"Hannibal?" he croaked. His lips were numb.

"Will. You are dangerously hypothermic. We have to warm you up slowly and carefully without moving you too much. We can't risk the cold blood moving too quickly to your heart."

Will wondered why Hannibal sounded so urgent. He was trying to hide it, but even in his freezing state, he could detect the hard and clipped notes in his voice. He nodded in reply, still confused. And why was he so cold.

"I'm mm m c... cc... c... cold dd... d."

"I know. I will help you, Will." With that, he carefully straightened Will's fingers, forcing a pained shout out of him, before he maneuvered Will's hands into his own gloves. The sudden searing heat on his skin was almost worse than the coldness of before.

Hannibal hushed his dry sobs gently.

The frozen stiff and useless blankets were shoved off him and a moment later Hannibal placed warm ones over his hunched body. Will was so confused, but he stopped wondering when the first hint of warmth penetrated through his clothes.

Then Hannibal was gone. The light leaving with him and if it weren't for the painful prickling that had started to spread through his fingers, he would have thought it a dream. He felt the car shift under him and he heard the distinctive sound of liquid being poured into the gas tank.

He saw the weak light of Hannibal's lamp appear again and when the car started back to life, Will wondered if he'd finally lost his grasp on reality. The cold air starting to circulate through the interior of the car made him shrink back into the blankets.

The loud bang of the car door had him flinching and suddenly Hannibal was back in his space, almost crawling on top of him.

He'd taken off his head lamp and placed it on the front seat, illuminating the car in a sharp blue glow, but Will could barely process what happened around him.

Then the blankets vanished, his shoes got dragged off and the wonderfully warm gloves went away. He made a sound of protest in the back of his throat as cold air seemed to penetrate him deeper than before.

Will sobbed, once, and then Hannibal's hot body was covering him from head to toe. His feet got pulled up until they were stuck between strong calves, his hands shoved under countless layers of warm clothes until they met hot skin and his face ended up pressed between Hannibal's shoulder and neck.

His hat was pulled off and warm big hands started to run over his scalp and through his hair in a soft and rubbing motion.

"As soon as I think you are safe to move, I will transport you to your house. Everything will be alright."

Will made a lost sound, entirely fixated on the heat seeping through countless places back into his body. He shifted his arms until they closed around Hannibal's torso and pressed his spread hands into the small of his back, trying to fuse with the heated weight above him. He was sure there were things to think and questions to ask, but his thoughts were a frozen slush, moving in slow motion.

It didn't take long before the heating of the car started to actually produce warmth and soon Will began to shake violently against Hannibal, his teeth once again clacking painfully. Warm lips pressed against his forehead.

"Soon now," the reassuring voice murmured against his cold skin.

Will tried to speak but his lungs and tongue didn't want to obey, so he just pressed his icy mouth to Hannibal's neck in reply.

He didn't know how long it took, but at some point he became aware that he'd stopped shaking. He still felt cold, but not unbearably so. Carefully, he shifted his arms and hands, testing his fingers pressed against warm skin.

"How are you feeling?" Hannibal asked, lips hovering over his ear. The warm air of his breath made him shiver in an entirely different way.

"Alive," Will managed to whisper. He was suddenly acutely aware of Hannibal's mostly bare chest against him. If his body would be able to spare the blood, he knew he'd be blushing.

"That is good to hear. I think it is now safe to move you."

Will tightened his arms, the thought of leaving the car and going outside truly terrifying.

The car took that moment to stutter to its second death. With a sigh, Will dropped his head back to the seat and untangled his arms from Hannibal's clothes. The man hurried to zip up his countless layers again.

He put his gloves back over Will's hands, before he shifted around and opened the door behind him. Ice cold air came flooding inside and Will wanted to cry. He felt as if he would never be fully warm again.

Hannibal crawled out backwards and then extended a hand to Will.

"Move slowly, please. We need to keep your pulse and blood pressure low until you're thoroughly warmed up again."

Will reached out for the hand carefully. His muscles and joints were still stiff and hurting and he felt 90 years old. Outside he found himself in the eerie silence of a snowed-in world after a huge storm. A bright moon illuminated every inch of the endless snowscape. It was almost bright enough to be day.

The cold air burned in his nostrils and his breath turned bright mist in front of his face.

Hannibal tugged at his hand and lead him to something that looked like a homemade construct. It seemed to be a mix between a long sleigh and a gurney covered in blankets and a sleeping bag. There was a harness and two skis in front of it.

It took Will a moment, but then he realized what Hannibal intended.

"You want to drag me on this thing all the way to Wolf Trap? Are you insane?"

"It's our only chance to get you to safety. Please get into the sleeping bag." He sounded a bit miffed.

Shaking his head, Will slowly worked his legs through the deep snow and gingerly sat down on the construct. It seemed more stable than it looked. He actually had room enough to stretch his legs in the bag and lean against a number of blankets and pillows.

Hannibal was there a moment later to wrap him up tightly until he was completely immobilized and only his eyes were free. If it weren't so wonderfully warm and soft he'd actually start to feel claustrophobic.

He watched as Hannibal strapped himself into the harness, put on the skis and took hold of his skiing sticks. With a strong pull they started moving and soon they were gliding through the glittery world of frozen Virginia. Will had to constantly blink tears out of his eyes, caused by the wind of their movement, but he couldn't stop watching the peaceful world around them. The only sounds Will could hear were the sharp hum the skis and his sleigh were making in the snow.

The beauty of the endless night sky filled with an infinite numbers of stars over the glowing plane of snow took his breath away.

All he could do was stare. He felt as if he and Hannibal were the last people to roam over an empty earth. The fierceness of the yearning gripping his heart surprised him.

With a frown, his gaze fell onto the man dragging him through the snow, his movements smooth and energetic as if he did this on a regular basis.

He'd come all the way out from Baltimore to find him, after he'd apparently decided Will was missing. That meant he had tried to check up on him. Hannibal hadn't just called the police or an ambulance. He went out himself to find him.

Who the hell would do such a thing? And why?!

Will shook his head. He was too cold and tired and exhausted to think about the crazy man who had rescued him. He leaned back and closed his eyes. He started to feel the cold more acutely again and hoped they would arrive soon.

The next time he opened his eyes he found himself on his couch in his house.

For a moment he was completely disorientated as he tried to decide what had actually happened and what had been a dream.

The attempt to sit up cleared up his confusion, because his body was a single throb of pain. He was cold despite being wrapped in countless blankets and thick clothes covering him. He thought he saw Buster's tail wagging somewhere in the heap on top of him.

Will gave up any attempt to move and dropped his head back against the arm of the couch. For the first time he really looked around and his eyes went big.

There was a strong fire going in his hearth, licking around heavy logs and crackling merrily. Several burning candles had been placed on the mantle and the table in front of him and with shock he found a small Christmas tree standing in the corner of his living room. It was a real one, not the bright pink plastic one he had stored somewhere in his barn. A chain of fairy lights had been threaded through the branches and silver tinsel was hanging in between them. Dark red baubles reflected the glowing lights and the tinsel.

He found several of the dog beds had been dragged under the tree and Will saw most of them occupied by his family.

Every inch of his room was glittering in the soft orange light of the flames, candles and lights. It felt as if he'd been thrown into a different universe. Warm and welcoming and homey in a way Christmas hadn't felt to him in ages. Maybe it never had.

He had to swallow around a hard lump in his throat.

Will took a deep breath to get a hold of himself and realized he was smelling... cookies? And hot chocolate. Definitely hot chocolate. Fuck.

He rubbed his eyes in an attempt to kill the threat of tears pressed behind his eyelids.

Buster crawled out of the blankets to look back over the couch and a moment later Hannibal appeared in his line of view. He was carrying two mugs in one hand and a plate in the other. His eyes were sparkling in the color of rich whiskey.

He was wearing a sweater that looked really, really soft and... were that Will's sweat pants?

"Hello, Will. I am glad to see you are doing better. How are you feeling?"

Will could just stare.

"I am dead, aren't I? I'm dead and this is the afterlife?"

Hannibal looked amused as he placed the mugs and plate on the couch table.

"Am I part of your afterlife then?" He sounded so smug that Will scowled.

Buster took the moment of their distraction and attempted to crawl towards the cookies on the table, but Will clucked his tongue, producing a protesting whine from the small dog.

Will carefully freed himself from his blanket prison and sat up, slowly. A violent shudder worked through his body, as if another remaining wave of coldness worked its way through his body despite the warmth everywhere around him.

"You shouldn't have done that. Where did you even get the ingredients? I'm quite sure there was no flour in my kitchen."

Will pulled his legs up a bit to make room for the man who promptly placed himself on the end of the couch, just to drag Will's feet from under the blankets and into his lap.

"I brought everything I needed on the sleigh just as I brought blankets, hot water bottles and a canister of gas. Candles. Christmas decorations." He said it so matter of fact that Will could just gape.

Hannibal smiled wider than he'd ever seen before, so very pleased with himself. His big and warm hands slowly started to massage and rub over Will's feet to produce more warmth.

Will shook his head and swallowed hard. He battled with himself to draw his feet out of the gentle grasp in embarrassment or to keep them there and enjoy the soft ministrations.

“Thank you. I don’t think I would have made it through the night.”

That sobered Hannibal up.

“I am relieved I was there on time. I would have missed you in my life quite fiercely.”

He looked so serious and earnest that Will felt himself blush and look away. His eyes wandered through the room instead, taking it all in.

“Are you still cold? Your body temperature was at a dangerous level and it will take some time until all effects are gone.”

“It’s fine. I’m getting there,” he replied, eyeing the steaming mugs on the table.

Hannibal reached out to place one of them in Will’s hands and then returned to what he was doing. Will was getting better at not being embarrassed about it. It felt good.

He moaned after taking the first sip.

“This is the best hot chocolate I’ve had in ages.”

Hannibal preened at the praise and Will almost waited for him to puff out his chest.

“Merry Christmas, Will,” he replied softly.

With a quick glance to his old clock on the mantle, he confirmed that it was indeed four o’clock in the morning. Christmas morning.

For a moment, he felt the insane urge to just stay up until he’d catch Santa climbing through his chimney. He wondered if he should put out cookies and a glass of milk for him, before he caught himself.

There never had been that kind of childish joy in his life. His dad had never pretended that Santa Claus was real. His few presents had waited for him on the kitchen table for breakfast and he’d unpacked them quietly while his father had read the newspaper next to him.

But right now? In this moment with all the Christmas decorations and the soft lights everywhere? Will wanted to be as childish as he’d never allowed himself to be.

He wondered what Hannibal would think of that.

Will looked back up to the man next to him and found himself watched with a soft look.

“We could stay here on the couch until morning. Maybe we’ll see Santa Claus deliver your presents. I have seen milk in your fridge. If you’d like to?” The question was careful and hesitant and Will didn’t have the heart to point out that there wouldn’t be presents for someone like him, so he just nodded.

Hannibal carefully placed his feet back on the couch and left for the kitchen. Will looked after him, still wondering if this was a dream and he was still in his car, freezing slowly to death.

A few minutes later the glass of milk and a plate with cookies had been positioned on one of his wooden mismatched chairs, right next to the Christmas tree. He saw some carrots as well and looked at Hannibal in question.

“For the reindeer of course,” he answered with a small smile. The bubble of joy and excitement in his stomach was hard to contain and Will just hid his face in his hands for a moment.

Hannibal returned to the couch and with sudden hesitation he stood at Will’s feet, looking down at him. With thundering heart and a tight pressure around his lungs, Will met Hannibal’s eyes head on and opened his mouth.

“I’m still cold.”

Hannibal’s eyes widened the tiniest of fractions. He immediately knew what Will implied.

“Body heat is still the best way to chase the last remains of hypothermia away,” he replied in a detached and clinical way, only the slightest waver at the end betraying his emotions.

Will nodded gravely.

“In that case, you should join me under the blankets to help warm me up, Dr. Lecter.”

“It’s only for the best, yes.”

Will couldn’t keep his grin from his face anymore as he scooted forwards and lifted the blankets to make room between himself and the back of the couch. Hannibal didn’t hesitate this time as he climbed over Will and slipped into the offered space.

They fit like two pieces of the same puzzle.

Hannibal spread the blankets over both of them before he placed his arm over Will’s hip, hand over his heart and pressed his chest against his back, their legs intertwining in the most natural way.

It took a few more moments for Will to fully relax into the hold though. Too foreign was the feeling of being so close to another human being.

Trying to distract himself from his flight reflex, he asked the question that had been on his mind the whole time.

“I can’t believe you had all of that stuff in your basement somewhere. Are you always prepared for the worst?”

There was a soft huff that stirred the hair at his nape and Will shivered.

“Basements are a useful addition to a house. Lots of room for storage and work.”

Then something changed and Will could feel a sudden tension in the man behind him. He wanted to turn around, but the arm around his middle stopped him. He stilled with held breath.

“As a child...” he broke off and Will wished he could see his face. “When I was very young, my parents and my sister were killed and I had to survive alone in the woods during Lithuanian winter for a few days. I almost starved and froze to death. Since then...” he fell silent.

Will swallowed hard. A phantom memory of darkness and coldness brushed his mind to the core, deeper than any temperature could reach. He shuddered and lifted his hand, gripping Hannibal’s fingers where they had curled into his sweater.

He didn’t say anything, too shocked right now, but he curled his hand around Hannibal’s and pressed back into his broad form, trying to comfort in this way.

After a few moments, Hannibal relaxed again and almost sagged against Will, as if all strength was gone and left him more exhausted than the trek from the car to his house had. Will felt his face pressing into his hair, just breathing him in.

The mood felt lighter after a while and Will closed his eyes as the soft silence of a lived-in house settled around them.

The dogs were snoring, one of them yipping in a dream, the fire crackled and the candles sizzled now and then. He could feel the movement of Hannibal’s body with his deep and regular breaths, their hands still linked over his chest.

Will couldn’t describe the feeling that overcame him. Peace maybe. Happiness.

Will snuggled back into the wide chest, the arm around him tightening minutely.

Whatever it was, he hoped it would stay. Maybe he actually should try to keep Hannibal around.

Just in case he got stuck in a snow storm again.

+++

End Notes

I love Christmas so much, so of course I had to write a Christmas fic and Hannibal Cre-Ate-Ive's Challenge was the perfect excuse *salutes the Pub* ;)

Works inspired by this one

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!